

Chair Bowman, Vice-Chairs Drazan and Pham, and members of the committee, for the record my name is Sandra Williams, and I'm here to testify in support of HCR 3. I am happy to support this resolution to recognize Dr. Brian Druker who has played not just an important, but an essential part of my life for the past six years. Dr. Druker and his ground-breaking research and work in medicine literally saved my life.

I'm a poet. I worked for 32 years as a college English teacher. I coordinated the largest Northwest literary network touring the finest writers in the country. Language – words – were my career, my avocation, my passion. But suddenly language was not my friend. When I was first diagnosed with CML, the words that flew at me were bewildering. *The extra-short chromosome 22, the extra-long chromosome 9, blasts, the Philadelphia chromosome*: what?? But I did understand “leukemia”; I did understand “cancer.” And I was scared.

I married into a family of scientists. So I turned to them about my diagnosis. One brother-in-law, Dr. Harry Selker, Dean of the Clinical and Translational Science Institute, Tufts University, School of Medicine in Boston, immediately reassured me, saying that I was in the best of all places to have CML – here in Oregon where Dr. Brian Druker at OHSU had made discoveries that were helping patients with this type of leukemia. Another brother-in-law, Dr. Eric Selker, a research geneticist at the University of Oregon in Eugene, also knew Dr. Druker's work and reputation. Both Harry and Eric assured me that I would be in good hands.

And then I met Dr. Druker. I expected a famous and – distant – doctor. I'd met physicians whose “bedside manner” was less than comforting. But Dr. Druker was cheerful and personable. He answered my many questions as we chatted about creative writing and Barcelona and whatever topics emerged from my questions about my treatment: would it be all right to travel, what if I moved out of Portland. Nothing was off the table, and Dr. Druker never made me feel foolish for asking about CML, about Gleevec, about what might lie ahead. After a year of treatment, when my test results read “undetectable” – another new word for me – Dr. Druker told me I could stop treatment if I remained undetectable (in remission) for two years. And this month, April 2025, after three years of being undetectable – and one full year off my Gleevec treatment, I received a call asking if I would support this resolution. You bet I do. Dr. Brian Druker most certainly deserves this recognition and honor. As I said before, Dr. Druker saved my life.